

for CLASS 8, 11/21: Reflections

Values Reflection

Justin & Tara will write out the 5 Values in your own words; in the negative (“not”) format and the positive. – You will end up with 10 sentences.

Yuhwen & Myōshin will work with your dyad-partner to write-up how one value relates to the other 4 values. – You will end up with 20.

(optional to use: Keizen’s Grid is on the webpage; shortened to 5)

The rest of the TAs will write answer these questions (Please cut & paste to your name below):

1. What do you think **are challenges** to learning, understanding, &/or mindful practice of __X__ value? – Related: What bias(es) around 1+ value have been revealed to you in this course?
 - a. Address at least 2 values.
 - b.
2. **How was SCANSS useful or not useful as a mindfulness practice/ investigative tool/exercise?** Please be specific.

S.C.A.N.S.S.

Stop and reflect.

Consider how you’ve been taught this value.

Ask yourself what’s your purpose or motivation with this value now.

Note it by journaling for 5 minutes, focusing on sensations, an emotion, & a thought.

Support yourself by _____.

Share an insight or a take-away from this practice/your experience.

#1 & 2 *can be combined*

— **DUE by 11:59pm on Wednesday, 11/20**

For **LAST** class on 11/21:

all about TA’ng: send me any questions you want me to cover BEFORE &/or bring them next week

Click on the below links to jump to your section (select the bookmark option)

[Eido](#) - Lying, stealing

[Keizen](#) sexuality,

[Sheila](#) - stealing, lying

[Elle](#) - killing, sexuality

intoxication

[Justin](#)

[Myoshin](#) - [link to](#)

[Tara](#)

[Kate](#)- killing, stealing

[template](#)

[Yuh Wen](#)

EIDO

1. What do you think **are challenges** to learning, understanding, &/or mindful practice of __X__ value? – Related: What bias(es) around 1+ value have been revealed to you in this course?
 - a. Lying
 - i. The biggest challenge that has been revealed during the course are the lies that are so habitual and so ingrained that they become almost invisible. This is where mindfulness of emotions and the body can be very important. I know that if I feel great tension in my body it can usually indicate some kind of lie that I am telling myself. One example is the lie of being polite or “doing what is expected of me.” Many times I have tension and stress and usually it involves some kind of lie I am telling myself. For example, if I am stressed about work, there is usually a lie about how I have to perform or my own expectations about what is required.
 - b. Intoxicating
 - i. The biggest challenge, in my opinion, is just how many different things can be intoxicating that are never considered. One person can be perfectly fine shopping online while a different person can spend hours looking at different items and buying indiscriminately. In addition, I would say that there are so many aspects of modern life that can become intoxicants. Just the mere act of being on the internet, for one example, can prove to be an intoxicant if it is not utilized mindfully. For myself, I know that I can spend mindless hours scrolling on the internet.
2. **How was SCANSS useful or not useful as a mindfulness practice/ investigative tool/exercise?**
 - a. Useful: SCANSS can be very useful as a container for the practice. I feel like SCANSS is most useful to me as a reminder, as a very definite process that I can repeat over and over again.
 - b. Not Useful: I think the biggest impediment could be if too many steps are included which can discourage use of SCANSS. In addition, if you forget to do it, that would definitely impede its usefulness. For me, the more practice I had doing it, the more it became second nature. Also, if I am stressed or in a hurry I am much less likely to do SCANNS.

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ELLE

What do you think **are challenges** to learning, understanding, &/or mindful practice of __X__ value? – Related: What bias(es) around 1+ value have been revealed to you in this course?

Not killing/ Reverence for Life:

Challenge: My initial challenge was expanding my understanding of this precept beyond not killing animals towards the greater understanding that killing could also be about killing connection, humanity, empathy. This greater understanding helped me see the non-physical ways of killing that inflict pain.

Not misusing sexuality/ True Love:

Challenge: Similar to the above, my initial challenge was my narrow reading of this precept to physical sexuality. Now I see how misusing sexuality could be one way for a person to diminish one's own self in order to chase after another's approval – not just in a romantic relationship, but also in friendships, familial, and professional relationships.

Also, further study around this precept showed me how intertwined this precept is with other precepts, particularly in expanding my understanding of the first precept (not killing)

How was SCANSS useful or not useful as a mindfulness practice/ investigative tool/exercise? [Please be specific.](#)

Useful:

- Exploring an formative memory
- Shifting/expanding my focus from thoughts to sensations and emotions.
- The version of SCAN that we did for “Not Lying” was the most useful, as it took out the mindfulness practice (less steps, no linking to another set of steps)
- *Suggestion:* The most useful version of SCAN ever was the recorded guided meditation from one of the Meditation classes (can't remember if it was 1.0 or 2.0). I would play that recording when SCAN was assigned and being guided was really helpful, vs my constant referring to different printouts (notes). I think looking at the notes kept me more head-based vs the guided meditations

Not useful:

- I agree with Eido – for me, there were a lot of steps in the different versions of SCANS and I would sometimes (often??) lose track.

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KATE

What do you think **are challenges** to learning, understanding, &/or mindful practice of ___X___ value? – Related: What bias(es) around 1+ value have been revealed to you in this course?

Not killing/ Reverence for Life:

I revisited my original grid and what I wrote as a difficulty still feels like a practice edge for me:

- Working with my belief that there are some things to fear, be angry about or be suspicious of (TNH, 38). In the world there is delusion. How do I stay safe (or keep my loved ones safe) when others are deluded and can be dangerous without being fearful or suspicious?

Not stealing/ True Happiness:

Similarly, the difficulty that I wrote about in my original grid still feels like an open question for me:

- Participating in the current U.S. economy means participating in a significant degree of exploitation. Things I buy are produced through unlivable wages or harm the earth or support war, for example. More specifically, what's hard is trying even though I know I won't be able to fully "fix it."

Biases/ reflection: I think what's underneath the above reflection is it's hard for me to stay in the gray area. I'm grasping for solid certainty. I want reassurance that if I do x, then I will be safe.

- This was also in my original grid: "...focusing on what we think we need... keeps us from being present to what's already right here." (CH, 36) Instead of grasping for solid certainty, perhaps I can ask: how is reverence for life right here? How is true happiness right here?
- What I called the gray area above is really the open area– also known as life as it is.

How was SCANSS useful or not useful as a mindfulness practice/ investigative tool/exercise? Please be specific.

Useful:

- The last SCANSS set-up for not intoxicating was clear and useful to me. The specific journaling prompts and questions were useful scaffolding to help me reflect more meaningfully. It also is proving to be a more sturdy and lasting understanding of some of my drivers and how I want to enact my agency in response to them.
- For the last SCANSS on not intoxicating, using a less intense memory was also helpful for me. It helped me be settled enough to do the mindfulness journaling practice without being too overwhelmed. Reflections on more intense parts of my past were still useful– they are more sticky though and that adds complexity to working with them more.

Not useful/ suggestions:

- The first S - “Stop and Reflect” was too broad and not specific enough for me to connect with. A suggestion is to try using “Settle” instead.
 - It could be: “Settle yourself with calming breaths, feeling your feet on the ground, or something you find centering. Give yourself a moment to relax in the moment.”
- I have other edits to the SCANSS prompts, if interested. I find some of the wording unclear. From my teaching experience I know that for someone with dyslexia, for example, having more streamlined instructions makes the difference between inclusion and frustration. Happy to work on that if interested.

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KEIZEN

1. sexuality
 - a. Popular social conditioning equates physical intimacy and romantic commitment and narrowly defines misconduct as separation of the two. In practice, there are as many ways to misuse intimacy as there are relationships! It's easy to burden the mere suggestion of physical intimacy with delusions (see intoxication below). While it may be possible to have physical intimacy in consonance with precepts, it is impossible to participate wholeheartedly in any relationship from a place of self hatred.
 - b. For me, recovery to be able to co-create and nourish relationships begins with understanding and meeting my own needs myself. After a lifetime of avoidance, I can identify this as a life-size challenge. I'm grateful that reality continues to provide love and care in abundance and diversity, teaching me to taste what's on the table as an alternative to craving the imagined perfect and accustomed unobtainable. While I no longer believe “I can make it work with anyone!”, I know I can be satisfied by a rich and expanding repertoire of social connections.
 - c. SCANSS can help me cut through the avoidance habit. My most recent discovery was that I doubt the value of knowing my thoughts, emotions, and attitude. I am discovering layers of causes and conditions that contributed to my habitual loneliness and let me take control or influence. Overemphasis on doing the steps right discourages me from practicing SCANSS, and I wouldn't want to share my free-written journaling. Overthinking can take over journaling. Self-consciousness and anticipation of sharing can discourage me from engaging fully with journaling as well. I might benefit from a time limit on journaling and a way to process it deeply such as in therapy or with a KM.
2. intoxication

- a. It is possible to intoxicate by indulgence AND by abstinence. The misuse is in a deficit of intention, a compulsive contraction toward or away from a substance.
- b. The substance can be anything, including virtue. If my attraction and motivation to practice Buddhism, skillful speech, etc. is to be a superior person, superior to you, who are contemptible in your unskillfulness, then I am drunk on virtue. Then how do I view myself when I inevitably break a precept? Then I am back to my despairing state of unmet needs in sexuality, above.
- c. The danger of intoxication is how well-hidden it is. In the midst of an experience, I don't want to know that my exuberance is irrational and dangerous. I used SCANSS to focus my practice for this far-reaching precept and realized it is one with relationships: even as I benefit profoundly from practice, my hindrances and old conditioning emerge. Becoming aware of emergent conditioning and bias gives me choice.

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MYOSHIN

How was SCANSS useful or not useful as a mindfulness practice/ investigative tool/exercise?

I found it difficult to keep track of the steps because some of them involved internal work (breathing, noting) that did not require me to write/prepare anything to share and others involved work deliverables like journaling, writing down a story from your past, etc. and I wasn't sure where these were supposed to go. The acronym was not useful to me because it didn't help me memorize the steps. I think that gathering the activities under things to do vs. things to write vs. things to share with the group would have helped me sort out what I was supposed to produce and where it was meant to go.

How keeping this precept keeps the precept below	1 Killing	2 Stealing	3 Sex	4 Lying	5 Intoxicating
1 Killing		nurturing other people's time is a way to refrain from stealing it from them.	erotic energy is a part of me and being aware of it is a way to engage with life and living	preserving my own trust in the value of my own life means that I must be open about my at-times limited	removing myself/leaving the computer when burned out from work preserves my ability to be

				capacity	present in my life
2 Stealing	being grateful and satisfied with what I have makes it easier for me to be kind to people.		denying myself the chance to feel bodily pleasure when it harms no one is taking something wonderful away from myself		give other people ample credit for things that I am being praised for keeps me from getting drunk on external recognition
3 Sex	when I refrain from clinging and grasping to another person because I think that they have something that I need, I am able to honor their life and mine,	chastity means not "crossing the line" (Huber, pg. 39) to ask for or take what's not given. Waiting at the line patiently and accepting the partner's desire lets them keep what is theirs		Purity means to simply accept what is happening in the moment rather than giving in to prior conditioning, which has nothing to do with reality and is a misrepresentation of reality	taking care of my body with exercise, a good diet, and enough sleep can help me regulate desires, sexual and otherwise, such as zoning out on my phone and giving in to mindlessness (Hanh, 74)
4 Lying	Saying something doesn't hurt or inconvenience me when it does kills trust		Using un-skillful speech to talk about or think about a person's body or attractiveness reinforces seeing other people as objects		Refusing to exaggerate even when other people in a conversation are doing it keeps me from getting caught up in that behavior
5 Intoxicating	Being on my phone when stressed out or in bed harms my ability to be present even though it feels like I need it to recover from the day			Gossiping and exaggerating how wild or off the hook someone else's behavior feels good but I never remember those moments with fondness or pride	

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SHEILA

1. Not stealing/I vow to live from generosity and tend to my fears of scarcity.

For me, understanding, and practicing with the precepts is now more clearly shaped by what Cheri Huber discussed as, “the commitment to awareness”. Awareness can be challenging and powerful and challenging. It’s not only what I do to cultivate awareness – it is what I do with the awareness that is important. That can be difficult given where I come from. It points to what Cheri was saying when she discussed the precepts as not identifying if I am good or bad but really knowing myself which becomes a lifetime practice. I can get caught in the good/bad judgement and abandon myself. I can be changed by the precepts when I am brave enough to really know myself and offer compassion. The bias – is that getting to know myself means dropping the very old thinking involving dualities (good/bad). Those traces are very strong and can prevent me from knowing and growing.

SCANSS is helpful to make real the commitment to awareness (a commitment to knowing and understanding myself). Each step in the process helped in knowing and understanding and it was helpful in moving from what would normally be a reaction to myself in those moments to more of a response to myself in those moments. I especially appreciated Considering where these values come from step. As time went on, I could see patterns which is so helpful.

2. Not Lying - There is no need to hide from the truth/I vow to live courageously and honestly.

The challenge to learning and understanding about not lying is in cultivating awareness to catch myself when I hide from the truth and its consequences. The bigger lies are easier to spot and work with the less obvious transgressions – white lies, omissions, manipulating of the truth in wording to a friend through a text, for example, is a challenge. I will admit that this happens lightning fast and it is a habit. Slowing down to be aware is a challenge. Working with this precept is challenging in that it requires meticulous attention and acceptance. I am a product of a rigid, dualistic, judging home and religious upbringing. For me, the idealized self has an active role in this precept. It’s part of the hiding from the truth. As a survivor of childhood trauma, the truth is a challenge, seeing things and being with things as they are is a challenge. Inner judgements, over effort Ing, and the strong should in my life can keep me from softening enough to myself to take a compassionate look at who I am and who I am not in those moments. Perhaps these precepts are softeners not the old rules that can bring judgments and hiding. Who wants to be “found out” especially by your mean, judgmental self and that is changing.

SCANSS was helpful with this precept and softening for me. The consideration was, again, important to understand and not hold myself hostage in the judgements but try to let those go. The journaling was helpful but hard. I am always resistant to putting pen to paper and writing things out but I found it more helpful than I thought it would be. As I am getting to know myself, I am noticing there is often resistance at first and confusion. So when I wrote even a little - I rested in that accomplishment. Participating as Rev Lien changed things up, working with the steps of SCANSS and making amendments was encouraging and supportive. It was helpful to see that Practice can be flexible, it can grow with me, and it can be changed up. An insight and perhaps the bias here. I am biased toward rigidity and the shoulds. This rigidity in approaching this precept can only strengthen the hiding not the exploration of the truth. *Be brave and courageous, Sheila. Offer generosity and honesty to self and others. This is available to you.*

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TARA

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For transparency, I was late to completing this task and didn't get the chance to connect with my partner Myoshin. I filled out my ten sentences myself, and am using her chart to add my thoughts about how some of the precepts are connected (my answers in purple).

	1 Killing	2 Stealing	3 Sex	4 Lying	5 Intoxicating
Negative	Do not intentionally cause harm.	Don't unnecessarily take or hoard resources.	Don't violate others' consent or boundaries.	Don't speak from a place of anger, fear, or delusion.	Don't mindlessly give in to craving.
Positive	Have metta and compassion for all beings.	Share all that you have and celebrate the good fortune of others.	Respect others' autonomy and love them without greed.	Speak to others in a way that creates space for connection and understanding.	Choose what you consume and how you spend your time from a place of awareness and love.

(Myoshin's chart below, my answers in purple)

How keeping this precept keeps the precept below	1 Killing	2 Stealing	3 Sex	4 Lying	5 Intoxicating
1 Killing		nurturing other people's time is a way to refrain from stealing it from them.	erotic energy is a part of me and being aware of it is a way to engage with life and living	preserving my own trust in the value of my own life means that I must be open about my at-times limited capacity	removing myself/leaving the computer when burned out from work preserves my ability to be present in my life
2 Stealing	Often motivated by greed, fear, or delusion, under the guise of "protection"		denying myself the chance to feel bodily pleasure when it harms no one is taking something wonderful away from myself	When you lie, you rob the other person of an opportunity to know the truth and respond. Both often involve deception.	give other people ample credit for things that I am being praised for keeps me from getting drunk on external recognition
3 Sex	Killing/causing harm and sexual misconduct both violate another person's autonomy and cause trauma.	Sexual misconduct and stealing both involve taking what isn't freely offered.		Sexual misconduct and lying destroy intimacy and connection instead of creating them.	Sexual misconduct is often a form of intoxication. People are motivated by craving rather than connection, and harm themselves in the process.
4 Lying	Saying something doesn't hurt or inconvenience me when it does kills trust	Lying and stealing are both often motivated by scarcity and fear.	Using un-skillful speech to talk about or think about a person's body or attractiveness reinforces seeing other people as objects		Refusing to exaggerate even when other people in a conversation are doing it keeps me from getting caught up in that behavior

5 Intoxicating	Being on my phone when stressed out or in bed harms my ability to be present even though it feels like I need it to recover from the day	Addiction can lead to taking what isn't freely given.	Sexual misconduct is often a form of intoxication. People are motivated by craving rather than connection, and harm themselves in the process.	Gossiping and exaggerating how wild or off the hook someone else's behavior feels good but I never remember those moments with fondness or pride	
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YUH WEN & JUSTIN

How keeping this precept keeps the precept below	1 Killing	2 Stealing	3 Sex	4 Lying	5 Intoxicating
Negative	Do not intentionally participate in harm and killing	Do not take what is not freely given. (Do not crave.)	Do not abuse love for yourself and others.	Do not communicate ways that obscure "what is". (Do not hide.)	Do not consume to avoid connection with myself or others.
Positive	Reverence for all life is liberating.	All the conditions I need to be happy are present.	True love is liberating. (Right relationship with self and others happens through awareness.)	Honesty about life "as it is" is liberating. (Realize the truth beyond conditioning and authority.)	Being present with life directly and clearly is liberating.
1 Killing		Stealing from others kills the opportunity to be connected to them authentically. (In what ways does my wanting and seeking rob me or others of happiness?)	Succumbing to lust without true love kills/harms our potential for genuine connection to ourselves and others. (Can I see and negotiate my needs in a way	Lying kills trust in my relationships with myself and others.	Intoxication and unmindful consumption clouds my judgement and makes me more susceptible to killing/harming behaviors.

			that respects my body and relationships?)		
2 Stealing	When I kill/harm an opportunity to be with things as they are, I am stealing the potential to learn from life.		Lust without true love is steals presence and connection between me and others.	Lying is a form of theft (of truth, possibility, honesty) that keeps me in a state of scarcity. (How often do I rehearse the lie that I am not enough?)	The trance of intoxication prevents me from being my best self, stealing my chances to connect with and be fully present with others.
3 Sex	When I kill/harm my self-confidence or connection with others, I am closing off the potential for true love of myself.	Stealing confidence and respect from myself or others own leads to a greater chance of misusing sex/lust for true love. (How can I resource myself (meet my needs healthily) in this moment to satisfy my cravings?)		Keeping myself in a dishonest state or under the influence of some false authority makes me more susceptible to committing unchaste acts of lust.	Intoxicating with acts of lust/desire can cloud my connection to presence, true love, and wholeness.
4 Lying	When I kill/harm possibility of myself/others, I deny the truth of what is present and "what-is" for myself/others. (What stories and beliefs am I living by and how are they causing me/others harm?)	Stealing from others is lying to myself/others about what I possess (and "deserve").	Acts of lust under the guise of true love is a harmful form of lying to myself and others. (Am I invisibilizing or sacrificing my needs in order to be liked or to belong?)		Intoxication obscures the truth that prevents the full experience of life - it is a form of lying and promotes more lying to sustain the cycle of intoxication.

<p>5 Intoxicating</p>	<p>Acts of killing/harm will cloud or make impure the experience of being able to experience life clearly and completely.</p>	<p>Stealing from others to fulfill my needs is a type of intoxication that clouds my understanding of what I need (vs what I want) and what is enough.</p> <p>(How addicted am I to seeking more, better? How does this show up in my habits?)</p>	<p>Lust/desire is an intoxicant that can temporarily fill the gaps in wholeness, but ultimately cloud my judgement and presence to live wholesomely.</p> <p>(Whose voice am I listening to and how is it keeping me/ what habits are keeping me separate from love?)</p>	<p>Lying is a form of intoxication that clouds my understanding of "what-is".</p>	
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